

VZCZCXRO4696
RR RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #0394 0991908
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 091908Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9834
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 2280
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 0352
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 2021
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC 1399
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1841

UNCLAS PORT AU PRINCE 000394

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/EX AND WHA/CAR
S/CRS
INL FOR KEVIN BROWN, DIANNE GRAHAM AND MEAGAN MCBRIDE
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: CITE SOLEIL COMMISSARIAT INAUGURATED

¶1. SUMMARY: The postponed inauguration of the USG-funded Cite Soleil Police Commissariat took place on March 25, 2009. With over 130 guests and members of the press in attendance at the event, the dedication of this impressive new building symbolized the positive changes in the Cite Soleil neighborhood under the Haiti Stabilization Initiative as well as the increasing, though still fragile, confidence in the security environment in Haiti. END SUMMARY.

¶2. On March 25, the new commissariat was officially inaugurated in the poor Cite Soleil area of Port-au-Prince. The 26,000 square foot building was renovated from an old market by NAS/INL with DOD funds as part of the Haiti Stabilization Initiative (HSI). HSI has invested 20 million dollars in the neighborhood in a pilot project to show how concentrated attention to the security and development needs of a specific geographic area can foster social and economic development. The return of the Haitian National Police (HNP) to an area from which they had been forced out by gangs a few years earlier was a visible symbol of the progress HSI has helped promote.

In addition to the commissariat and the equipment donated, the program has helped develop curriculum and introduce community policing to Cite Soleil. As a result, the HNP now plans to introduce community policing throughout the country.

¶3. Among the guests at the inauguration were Prime Minister (PM) Michelle Pierre Louis, Minister of Justice (MoJ) Exume, the Minister of Public Works, the Mayor of Cite Soleil, the Special Representative of the Secretary General of MINUSTAH along with other MINUSTAH officials, the entire leadership of the HNP led by the Director General, chiefs of several diplomatic missions, and guests from the local community and the private sector. The remarks made by PM Pierre-Louis, Mayor Wilson and MoJ Exume specifically thanked the USG for their continued support in Haiti and particularly in Cite Soleil. Mayor Wilson noted that Cite Soleil has historically been used as a barometer for the security situation in the country, and that the new commissariat was evidence of the progress that had made in recent months and years. Ambassador Sanderson and PM Pierre-Louis both stressed the importance of community outreach and community policing as part of the new outlook in law enforcement nationwide and in historically difficult neighborhoods. Ambassador Sanderson praised the HNP leadership for its vision and courage in returning to Cite Soleil. PM Pierre-Louis remarked that the new commissariat building needed to be seen as an open, welcoming space for dialogue in the community.

¶4. Despite the earlier postponement of the event on short notice and a tardy start to the inauguration, the event went extremely smoothly, thanks in part to the active engagement of the HNP in the logistical aspects. A small crowd of local residents assembled outside the Commissariat; these included 3 or 4 protesters, whose

compensation claims in regards to land adjacent to the commissariat had previously been determined to be unfounded.

15. COMMENT: Initially, fewer than 80 guests had been expected; that over 130 would come to a neighborhood not often frequented by many was perhaps an indicator of the renewed confidence in the security situation. However, the next few months, with upcoming elections and still limited economic opportunities, will be a litmus test of the recent relative stability. In Cite Soleil, the extent to which the HNP continue to reach out to the community and dispel the fears of the local populace, whose last experiences with the police were violent, will determine the success of their return and the ability of Cite Soleil to continue to develop.

SANDERSON